

# S.a.v.a.n.n.a.h R.i.v.e.r S.i.t.e Citizens Advisory Board

## Board Beat

Summer 1998

### Integrated Efforts Require National Discussions

As the SRS Citizens Advisory Board delves deeper into environmental management issues at the site, one thing is increasingly apparent. "We need to talk with other stakeholders DOE-complex-wide," says Board Chair Ann Loadholt. "We can't continue to make recommendations in a vacuum. Stakeholders complex-wide will have to work together to meet the vast challenges facing the Department," she said. And a great network is already in place to do just that: 12 Site Specific Advisory Boards (SSAB) at DOE have been established at DOE facilities since 1993. "For many issues, it makes no sense to try to solve problems on an individual site-by-site basis, and we all know where site budgets are headed," says Karen Patterson, Education Subcommittee Chair. "That's why in November 1997, our Board recommended that DOE-HQ move aggressively to resolve nation-wide issues such as standardization of waste characterization methods, consolidation of procurement practices, changes to transportation systems and regulations, and

*"We can't continue to make recommendations in a vacuum. Stakeholders complex-wide will have to work together to meet the vast challenges facing the Department,"*

*Ann Loadholt, SRS CAB Chair*

the establishment of uniform cleanup levels." Of course there are enormous challenges to be overcome and issues to be resolved, including equity among states, agreement among various state and federal regulators/agencies and political considerations. However many efforts are underway and although the task looks colossal, it's not impossible.

The DOE contractor recommendation on environmental management integration across the DOE complex has been expanded to include nuclear materials. DOE-HQ efforts to inform national stakeholders have increased; all SSAB chairs are meeting and communicating more frequently; national discussions were attempted and several efforts are planned for the summer of 1998. "These are steps in the right direction, but we definitely need more momentum," said Ms. Patterson.

What are the important upcoming DOE decisions that affect us all?

- Selection of disposal sites for low level waste and mixed low level waste
- Interim storage of high level waste from West Valley
- Final disposition of high level wastes
- Consolidated storage of surplus non-pit plutonium

Several efforts are underway to ensure stakeholders have the opportunity to get involved in these and other decisions. Intersite workshops sponsored by the League of Women Voters are planned for June 21-23 at San Diego State University and June 25-27 at Loyola University, Lake Shore Campus in Chicago. These workshops will give stakeholders the chance to understand these decisions and how they fit together, as well as learn about the alternatives being considered and the trade-offs and implications of these decisions. A final report identifying key themes will be issued by DOE-Headquarters.

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## 1997: A Productive Year

*An SRS Citizens Advisory Board Progress Report*

Last year was a productive year for the SRS Citizens Advisory Board. The Board approved 23 recommendations in 1997 compared with 14 in 1996. The emphasis of the recommendations shifted to include more long-range, strategic issues than in previous years. The Department of Energy acceptance rates remained high.

Twelve of the 1997 recommendations focused on planning and budget versus only four during the 1994-1996 period. Many Board interests have been institutionalized and no longer require recommendations.

Savannah River continues to be responsive to CAB recommendations. DOE-HQ responses to recommendations are less timely. The Environmental Protection Agency and South Carolina Health and Environmental Control were slow to respond but responses were brought up to date by May.

A major concern about state equity issues emerged in Board deliberations during 1997. This issue will be increasingly important as inter-site exchanges of wastes and nuclear materials are planned and implemented.

## Essay Winner

*"I think keeping an environment neat is not a job or career but a responsibility."*

Heather Clark,  
Myers Middle School



Heather Clark is a sixth grade student at the Myers Middle School in Savannah, GA, who won a CAB-sponsored essay contest on her role in protecting the

environment. She is very active in her school, community and church. She also sings in the Junior Choir at the Southside Baptist Church. Miss Clark attends Social Studies and Reading Class taught by SRS CAB member, Rebecca Gaston-Witter.

## Recommendations In Brief



Since the last publication of this newsletter, the following recommendations have been initiated by the SRS Citizens Advisory Board:

46. **Plug-in-ROD Approach** - A recommendation commending DOE for implementing an approach to streamline the evaluation effort for remediation of similar waste sites and suggestions of where to include public involvement in the process.
47. **Environmental Management Integration** - SRS Specific Recommendations regarding the role of SRS in making optimum use of DOE facilities to improve the efficiency of clean up across the DOE complex.
48. **Environmental Management Integration** - A recommendation to DOE-Headquarters to move aggressively in resolving various nationwide issues: equity, regulatory and political concerns to obtain buy-in for environmental management integration.
49. **Dispositioning of Excess and Surplus Facilities at SRS** - A recommendation to prepare a strategic plan for disposition of SRS excess and surplus facilities and decommission three experimental reactors in Building 777-10A based on their relative risk. Decommissioning these reactors would remove the last of the reactors from the administrative area and free up space in 777-10A for other uses.
50. **Early Action Strategy** - An endorsement of a strategy developed by DOE, SCDHEC and EPA to streamline the decision process for deciding on early actions to clean up waste units listed in the Federal Facility Agreement and suggestions for public involvement opportunities.
51. **Environmental Management Integration** - A recommendation for SRS to accept vitrified high level waste from the West Valley Demonstration Project for interim storage prior to shipment to a final geologic repository with several provisions. A minority report was also submitted by seven board members.
52. **Draft EIS on Management of Certain Plutonium Residues and Scrub Alloy Stored at Rocky Flats** - A recommendation to DOE-HQ supporting the preferred alternative to stabilize the materials in F Canyon at SRS.

*continued on page 3...*

## Budgets Provide for Continued Cleanup

Savannah River has received new budget authority of \$1,406,000,000 for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998. The majority, \$1,199,000,000, funds Environmental Management activities.

FY 1998 funding is consistent with goals of the "Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure" issued in February. The funds are adequate to assure compliance with regulatory requirements for environmental restoration and site cleanup including vitrification of high level waste sludge from waste tanks. Continued progress will be made on commitments to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board and transuranic waste will be prepared for shipment to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in 1999.

An SRS budget of \$1,590,00,000, has been submitted to Congress as part of the overall DOE budget for FY 1999. This budget reflects a \$78,000,000 projected increase in Environmental Management expenditures which could enhance the SRS roles in supporting complex-wide and national nonproliferation and

cleanup objectives and mitigate employment impacts. Spending on Defense Programs is expected to decrease slightly from FY 1998 to FY 1999 as shown below.

### Budget Summary

	<u>FY 1998*</u>	<u>FY 1999**</u>
Environmental Management	\$1,199	\$1,278
Defense Programs	161	158
Nonproliferation & Other	46	54
Total New Budget Authority	\$1,406	\$1,490

\* Excludes Privatization (\$25M)

\*\* Reflects Department's Congressional Submittal

### **Recommendations...**, continued from page 2

53. **SRL Seepage Basins Remediation** - Recommends that the three agencies (DOE, EPA and SCDHEC):

- not permit slippage in the currently scheduled remediation field start date of March 1999.
- resolve all of the EPA and SCDHEC comments including agreeing on a preferred alternative and the method of disposing the contaminated soils and vegetation by April 15, 1998. To expedite comment resolution, we urge those comments that are not substantive be dismissed by the agencies.

54. **SRS Beneficial Reuse Program** - The recommendation objective is to take SRS Radioactive Scrap Metal (RMS), and either free release the metal or turn it into usable products instead of eventually disposing of it as waste and to take the lead in DOE to develop a market for free release and reuse products.

55. **Composite Analyses (CA)** - A recommendation that the three agencies arrive at a decision on using composite analyses at SRS as part of the process to determine the feasibility of disposing CERCLA waste in a DOE regulated facility by June 15, 1998. And to prepare CAs for each major industrial area at SRS where radioactive materials have been used or stored.

56. **Remediation of F-Area Retention Basin** - Recommends a low-permeability cap for the basin, continued groundwater monitoring and grouting the inside of the pipeline. This is less extensive remediation than currently proposed by SRS.

## Defense Waste Processing Facility



Canisters filled  
as of June 2, 1998

**389**

## SRS Board Members Positive about Accomplishments

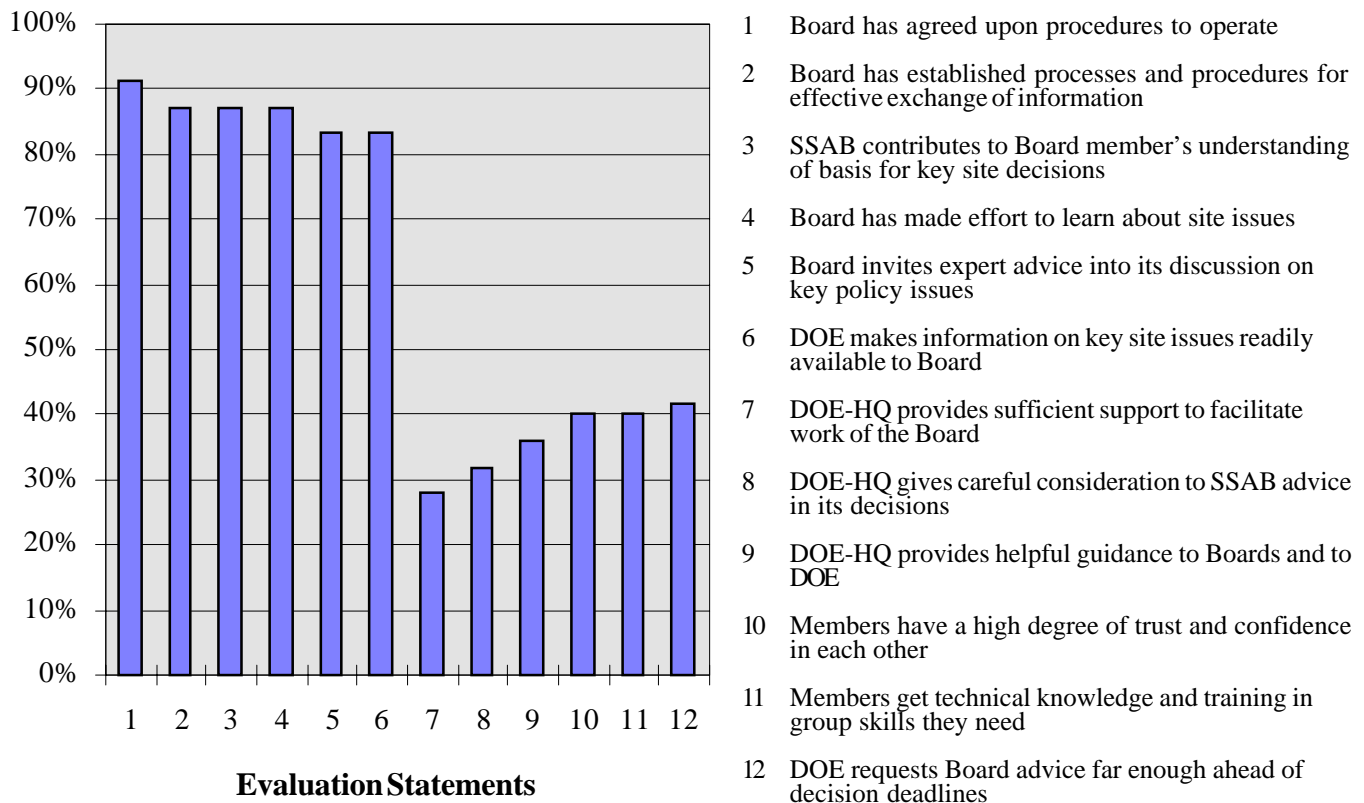
Members and ex-officio members of the SRS CAB are generally positive about Board accomplishments. Results of the 1997 Evaluation Survey of Site Specific Advisory Boards (SSAB's) by DOE Headquarters show SRS Board members giving "effective" or "successful" marks to 34 of the 67 evaluation statements. Only 10 of the statements were identified as "areas of concern".

The top six scores related to Board operations are shown in the graphic. Respondents from the Hanford and Idaho Boards rated the same six statements equally high or higher. Other high marks went to SRS Board's contribution in facilitating effective exchange of viewpoints and improving DOE and regulators understanding of public perception. Over 78% agreed that the SSAB initiative is a good use of funds; the other 11 DOE sites gave an average agreement of 72% to this statement.

At the low end of Board member's evaluations were six statements receiving less than 42% positive responses; four of these related to DOE Operations Office and DOE Headquarters issues. Although SRS responses to the DOE statements were low, responses were even lower at Hanford and Idaho. Additional SRS Board concerns included member trust and confidence in each other and adequacy of technical knowledge and training in group skills.

These data were developed from the second annual evaluation of SSAB's released recently by the DOE Office of Intergovernmental and Public Accountability. The report summarized responses to questionnaires returned by Board members and agency officials at twelve sites.

### 1997 SRS Board Evaluations



# **Focus on DOE Waste Management**

## **This Issue: Low-Level Waste**

Low-Level Waste (LLW) is radioactive waste that is not classified as high-level waste, transuranic waste, spent nuclear fuel, or by-product material. LLW generally contains short-lived isotopes and is only slightly radioactive. Typical examples include protective clothing, wiping rags, and contaminated tools.

Approximately 35,812 cubic meters (912,454 cubic feet) of low-level waste currently are in the SRS inventory. Another 230,566 cubic meters (8,150,506 cubic feet) will be generated in the next decade. Current SRS plans call for 95,602 cubic meters of LLW to be processed by the Consolidated Incineration Facility (CIF). About 5,176 cubic meters of CIF residue from low-level and mixed waste processing will be buried in E Area vaults.

Ultimate disposition of SRS LLW is shown at the bottom of the next column. A substantial volume of contaminated metal and equipment is expected to be free released after survey and decontamination. The E-Area waste vaults will receive low-activity material which has been compacted off site, low-level Naval materials, and bulk waste. Naval reactor components will be stored on E-Area pads. The process for reducing the size and/or



Low-level waste is mixed with cement and ash and pumped to concrete vaults at the Saltstone SRS Facility.

### **Low-Level Waste Volumes** measured by cubic meters

Hanford	89,000
Idaho	105,000
Los Alamos	150,000
Oak Ridge	270,000
Savannah River	510,000
Others	376,000
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>1,500,000</u></b>

decontaminating large equipment has not been defined but this material is projected for off-site disposal or reuse.

The Department of Energy's Environmental Management Integration (EMI) initiative proposed LLW disposal at a centralized facility. The proposal includes shipping SRS waste to the Nevada Test Site rather than using SRS E-Area vaults. A detailed cost analysis will be required to verify the projected financial benefits of this initiative. The preferred alternative in the Final Waste Management Program EIS is regional disposal at two or three DOE sites.

#### **Disposition of SRS Low-Level Waste Cubic Meters**

• E-Area Trench Disposal	79,050
• Free Release	26,866
• E-Area Low Activity Waste Vault Disposal	17,344
• E-Area Disposal on Pads	3,909
• E-Area Intermediate Level Vault Disposal	2,937
• Off-Site Disposal / Reuse	1,005
• Mixed Low-Level Waste Processing	396



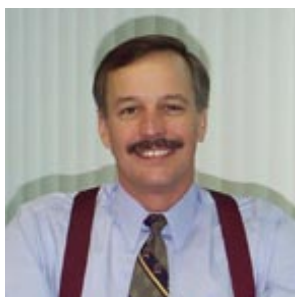
# Welcome

to the Newly Elected CAB Members



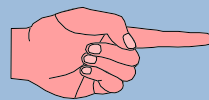
From left to right: (1st row) Lola Richardson, Barbara Murphy, (2nd row) Barbara Gordon, Maria Reichmanis and Wade Waters (not pictured is Debra Hasan)

## to Mike Schoener as the new SRS CAB Facilitator



The SRS CAB welcomes new Board facilitator Mike Schoener of MAS Consultants, Inc. President of the small Aiken-based training and consultant company, Mike has been providing diverse technical services to the Department of Energy and

various commercial clients since the company's inception five years ago. Mike has more than 23 years of related nuclear experience in the areas of maintenance, operations, technical training, strategic planning, facilitation and management. Mike has a Bachelor of Science in Construction Management and Technology from Bowling Green State University where he graduated magna cum laude. He served a six-year duty in the Navy Nuclear Power Program and went on to work in the commercial nuclear industry. Mike resides in Aiken with his wife and two children.



## Member Spotlight



**Bill Lawless, Ph.D.:** Bill is employed as an associate professor of mathematics and social psychology at an historically black college. A former DOE employee, Dr. Lawless was featured in the video documentary "Building Bombs," he holds an M.S. in mechanical engineering and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in social psychology. He served on the citizens working group which drafted the charter and developed the selection process for the SRS Citizens Advisory Board. He co-chairs the Environmental Restoration & Waste Management Subcommittee



**Jimmy Mackey:** Jimmy works in the Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort as a contracts Procurement Technician. Jimmy's a member of the Shell Point Elementary School Improvement Council, Beaufort County School District Legislature Issues Committee, Beaufort County Police Department Volunteer Services, SRS CAB NMM/Budget/Admin. Subcommittees, and an active Federal Military Natural Resources game warden.



**Lane Parker:** A certified hazardous waste work trainer, Lane is affiliated with the International Union of Operating Engineers and resides in Graniteville, SC. He is the chair of the Public Outreach Subcommittee.



**Karen K. Patterson:** Karen is an environmental scientist who holds a B.A. and M.A. in biology. She analyzes industrial releases to the environment and assesses the impacts of those releases as a consultant to a contractor at SRS. She is the secretary of the Lakes and Watershed Association of South Carolina. She is the SRS CAB Education Subcommittee chair.




**Perjetta K. Smith:** P. K. is an SRS environmental engineer with a B.S. in physics and an M.S. in nuclear engineering. She has been a part-time instructor at a local technical college in nuclear engineering technology. Her training includes the Government Institute RCRA Regulations Course. She chairs the Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee.



**Beaurine H. Wilkins:** Beaurine is the owner of a limousine service in Augusta. She also works for the Board of Education for Richmond County. She chairs the Administrative Subcommittee. She also serves on the Center for Disease Control Health Effects Subcommittee.

## Check out our Web Site !!

**Savannah River Site**  
**Citizen's Advisory Board**



Welcome to the Savannah River Site's  
Citizen's Advisory Board  
Web Site.

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[Bylaws](#) [Operations Update](#)

Become a member of the SRS Citizen's Advisory Board!  
[Applications](#) are accepted year round.  
Candidate selection is held in the fall/winter of each year  
for spring elections.

**WWW.SRS.GOV**

[general/people/srs-cab/srs-cab.html](http://general/people/srs-cab/srs-cab.html)

## Risk Working Group Formed

As an extension of the Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee, a Risk Working Group is being formed to analyze and understand risk management at SRS. On May 12, members of the group met to define the goals and objectives for this two-year effort. The group plans to review differences on risk assessments funded by various DOE programs and the roll-up of the risk assessments into the SRS Integrated Priority List. They will also review the issue of compliance versus risk and how risk is communicated to the public. The group seeks to develop recommendations to SRS on improving its risk management process and the methods used to communicate risk. If you would like to learn more about this working group, please call the CAB toll free number 1-800-249-8155.

## *Integrated Efforts..., continued from page 1*

The Community Advisory Board for the Nevada Test Site (NTS) Program is planning a more specific effort regarding low level waste disposal. The Nevada Test Site is being considered for regional/centralized disposal of low-level waste. SSABs are being surveyed about their concerns and currently two dates are being considered for a Low Level Waste Seminar (August 10-12 or August 17-19, 1998). A tour of NTS will be available for those interested in viewing the facilities. In addition to key speakers, there will be small group sessions focusing on the four topics of utmost interest.

DOE needs to make these decisions for various reasons. By consolidating and integrating efforts, the Department will move nearer to closing sites no longer needed for the Nation's defense. These efforts also will allow DOE to become more cost efficient and make better use of existing facilities. The DOE Environmental Management program faces significant technical and financial challenges in cleaning up the environmental legacy of nuclear weapons production with uncertain funding. Addressing common problems from an integrated, complex-wide perspective is necessary to enable DOE to meet its objectives within an acceptable budget.

"Integration of environment management across the complex is absolutely necessary," says Patterson. "It's the right thing to do, it makes sense, saves money and moves us closer to where we want to be."

## **American Nuclear Society THIRD TOPICAL MEETING**

### **DOE Spent Nuclear Fuel and Fissile Materials Management**



**Francis Marion Hotel  
Charleston, SC  
September 8 - 11, 1998**

For more information, contact Donna Martin @ 803-725-7169



## Upcoming Board Meetings



### **1998**

July	27-28	USC-Aiken	Aiken, SC
September	28-29	Sheraton Augusta	Augusta, GA
November	16-17	Adam's Mark	Columbia, SC

Generally, meetings are held on Monday from 6:30-9 p.m. and Tuesday from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

"Board Beat" is published semi-annually by the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. Content is provided by Board members and support staff. Please send your comments and suggestions to:

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